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SUBJECT: LETTER TO PRESIDENT OBAMA FROM ACTING PARLIAMENT
SPEAKER SHEIKH KHALED ATTIEH

Begin Text of Embassy translation:

Republic of Iraq
Council of Representatives of Iraq
Office of the First Deputy

2 February 2009

Your Excellency Barack Obama,
President of the United States of America

I would like to present Your Excellency my warmest
congratulations on the occasion of your
taking office as President of the United States of America
and my best wishes to you and
our friends in the United States for continued progress and
prosperity.

A nation that remains faithful to the values and principles
of justice and equality will
be able to effectively contribute in advancing human
civilization and shine as a beacon
for other nations and will help the entire world overcome the
hurdles of the past and move
forward to a brighter future.

Mr. President: your assuming office comes at a time when
political, economic and social
challenges facing humanity take on a universal character,
which makes it incumbent on all
nations to cooperate and stand together in facing the
challenges and providing a secure
future for our future generations and build a lasting peace.

Both Americans and the Iraqis have faced many common
challenges over the past five years.
Together and through the sacrifices of our men and women we
have overcome the dangers that
threatened the heart of our nascent democracy. However, the
current realities in Iraq have
changed for the better and we are more hopeful than ever that
our children will enjoy a brighter
future. This will require changing the requirements for the
realities on the ground and rearranging
the priorities of the decision makers and those who are in
charge of advancing the current conditions
in Iraq. Today, we are mindful of the need for development
and providing better opportunities for a
free and decent life for the have-nots in all fields in
parallel with-if not ahead of-our security
and military requirements. Security is synonymous to
development and without development one cannot
speak of security.

The quick succession of events that followed the toppling of
Saddam's dictatorial regime and the

mistakes that were made provided an impetus to adopt a different strategy. We believe that the same Iraqi arena on which the blood of victims was shed is the same one that will bear our best features of change. Hopefully, this will provide a precious opportunity for the United States as a nation to rejuvenate the great principles on which it was established through its continued contribution in building a just and democratic society in Iraq.

Our great ambition and hope for Iraq is to have a strong alliance and partnership with the free world and for the sons and daughters of the Iraqi people to see the importance and usefulness of such alliance for the restoration of their sense of openness and the intellectual exchange of ideas with the free world, of which they had been deprived by former tyrannical regimes. It is for these reasons that people in their homes and the poor in their villages must share the fruits of the new democratic state of affairs in Iraq. I am confident that that will go a long way toward uprooting the remnants of the seeds of terrorist ideologies that seeped into our society in the recent past.

Our democratic experiment will not succeed and take root unless the social, economic and cultural aspects of life go hand in hand. This will call for continued efforts of all friends and courageous nations with which we share common human values and nations with which we share common human values and legitimate interests in supporting our Iraqi people to complete their national project, particularly

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considering the fact that they have opted for partnership rather than conflict and have committed themselves to build their homeland and preserve their security and prevent the enemies of peace and democracy from interfering in their own affairs. Today, the future of Iraq is being made by its sons and daughters. Our people that hold its history sacred will never forget their friends and those that helped us complete the march toward the realization of freedom, prosperity and welfare.

Please accept my best wishes for your continued success,

Sheikh Khaled Attieh
Acting Speaker, the Council of Representatives

End Text.
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